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ATHENA Roundtable 2017 Restoring Excellence: Ideas that Work for 21st Century College Leadership

ACTA's 2017 ATHENA Roundtable conference, "Restoring Excellence: Ideas that Work for 21st Century College Leadership," is our largest conference to date.

The event, held on October 20 in Washington, DC, brought together innovators in higher education and leading scholars to address the continuing challenges facing campuses nationwide.

ACTA's board chair, Robert Lewit, welcomed the conference audience, and President Michael Poliakoff opened the first session: "A Galvanizing Year for Free Speech; A Common

Agenda for Academic Freedom." **Catherine Rampell**, *Washington Post* columnist, moderated the panel of distinguished scholars. **Dr. Steven Benner**, a pioneer in synthetic biology and, in 1974, a student member of the storied Woodward Committee on Freedom

of Expression at Yale, began the discussion. He drew a thought-provoking comparison between scientific method and the state of intellectual engagement on campus: Scientific

discovery begins with the skepticism of experts and involves meticulously evaluating data to test a hypothesis. So also students must be taught to understand that engaging opposing viewpoints leads to intellectual enlightenment and the discovery of new, stronger positions.

Allison Stanger, professor of politics and economics at Middlebury Col-

lege, provided three lessons from her experience of being assaulted by protestors at Middlebury as she tried to moderate a talk by visiting scholar Charles Murray. First, colleges and universities cannot be safe spaces—embedded in echo chambers that only serve

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Dillard University President Walter Kimbrough speaks at ATHENA.

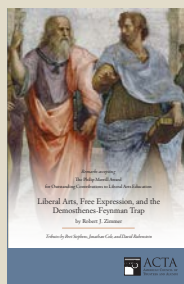
Liberal Arts, Free Expression, and the Demosthenes-Feynman Trap

Robert J. Zimmer, President, University of Chicago

Remarks Accepting the Philip Merrill Award:

Liberal Arts, Free Expression, and the Demosthenes-Feynman Trap

In this compelling speech, President Zimmer argues that colleges and universities must not allow open discourse to fall prey to the Demosthenes-Feynman Trap—a snare which excludes arguments that challenge us, in order to affirm what we already believe to be true, ultimately leading to self-deception. Call 202.467.6787 or visit GoACTA.org for a copy.



www.GoACTA.org

info@GoACTA.org

1-888-ALUMNI-8

**Walter V. Wendler, President
West Texas A&M University**

“Thank you for providing me with a copy of *How Much is Too Much?* . . . [It] will facilitate a needed conversation between many presidents and their surrounding committees. I commend your foresight on this issue and will consider the points in the literature as West Texas A&M University moves into the first phases of its own initiative . . . Thank you for supporting academic leaders in their educational initiatives. The work we do today ensures a bright future for our students tomorrow.”

Editor’s Note: How Much is Too Much? Controlling Administrative Costs through Effective Oversight is ACTA’s latest guide for trustees and administrators.

**Colin Parks, Director
Institute on Economics and International Affairs
Washington, DC**

“[T]hank you for hosting . . . an intern in your office this summer . . . It means a great deal to our students and to me that you took the time to invest in their career by so generously sharing your expertise and giving them an opportunity to contribute to the mission of your organization. Thanks to you, our students will graduate with a competitive advantage in the job market and more fully prepared to enter the workforce.”

**Erez Binyamin, Student
Rochester Institute of Technology, NY**

“I’m emailing you to thank you and ACTA for hosting the [ATHENA] conference . . . and for vigilantly defending the best interests of students like me across the country. I met so many great people and was exposed to incredible ideas. I cannot express to you enough how grateful I am to have been given this opportunity.”

**Marissa Williams, Intern, ACTA
Student at University of Akron**

“I just wanted to express my gratitude for the opportunity to intern with ACTA . . . I learned so much about ACTA as an organization, but also the importance of a solid liberal arts education. . . . I am sure that the lessons I have learned this summer will stick with me forever.”

**Joseph G. Prud’homme, Director
Institute for the Study of Religion, Politics, and Culture
Washington College, MD**

“Thank you very much for this invitation to the ATHENA event. . . . I am delighted to accept and will bring three of the top students affiliated with my program to this powerful event. I remember in the years past it has always been very enlightening and invigorating.”

New ACTA Board Member: Edwin Williamson

ACTA welcomes Edwin Williamson as the newest member of our distinguished board of directors. Mr. Williamson has held an impressive career in law and has been a great friend to ACTA for many years. Upon graduation from the New York University School of Law in 1964, he began work at the firm of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, becoming a partner in 1971; he became Senior Counsel there in 2006. He is an expert in public international law and national security issues, serving as the Legal Adviser of the U.S. Department of State from 1990–1993. In this capacity, he influenced the legal positions of the United States in the 1990–1991 Persian Gulf conflict; the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the concomitant issues of state succession; during the dissolution of Yugoslavia; and during the negotiations to end the Serbian-Bosnian conflict.

Mr. Williamson brings to the ACTA Board of Directors his extensive experience serving on both corporate and philanthropic boards. He has served as vice chairman and a member of the Executive Board of the Business and Advisory Committee to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and of the Executive Committee of the U.S. Council for International Business. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the American Law Institute. He is on the board of the South Carolina Governors School for Science and Math, and is both a former chairman of the Board of Regents and a trustee of the University of the South.

Mr. Williamson and his wife Kathe have been longtime active supporters of ACTA. We are delighted to welcome him to the board. His legal expertise and keen knowledge of higher education will assist ACTA’s efforts to foster academic freedom, excellence, and accountability on America’s college and university campuses. ●

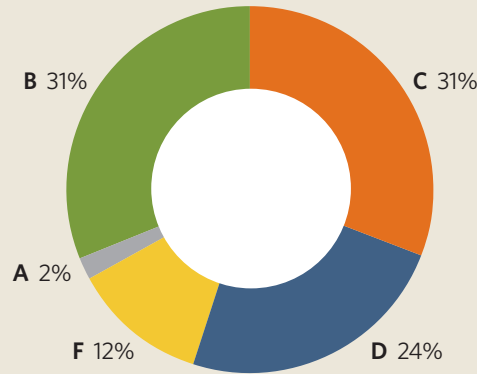


ACTA Releases 2017–2018
What Will They Learn?™ College Ratings

Now in its ninth iteration, ACTA's annual *What Will They Learn?* (WWTL) guide continues to report on the state of academic standards in American higher education. Our curricular improvement team sifted through publicly-available course catalogs to find those universities that put a well-designed core curriculum at the forefront of their institution's mission. The report surveyed over 1,100 public and private four-year institutions and their commitment to ensuring all students gain the skills and knowledge they need for the challenges ahead. ACTA's guide evaluates whether schools require seven core subjects essential to a foundational liberal arts education: Composition, Literature, (intermediate-level) Foreign

Language, U.S. Government or History, Economics, Mathematics, and Natural Science.

WHAT WILL THEY LEARN?™ GRADE BREAKDOWN



This year's results are staggering. Only 18% of American colleges and universities require students to take a course in United States government

or history. Only 3% require a course in economics, and just 12% require the study of a foreign language at the intermediate level. Only 24 institutions throughout the country, a shockingly low 2%, require six or more of the seven core subjects, earning an "A" grade. Moreover, 66% of universities required only three or fewer of the core subjects in their general education curriculum.

With such gaps in requirements, colleges are largely failing to provide students with a foundational education. A recent survey by Payscale revealed that 60% of managers thought graduating seniors were simply not prepared in critical thinking and problem solving. The survey also found that 44% and 46%, respectively,

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FROM the BOOKSHELF

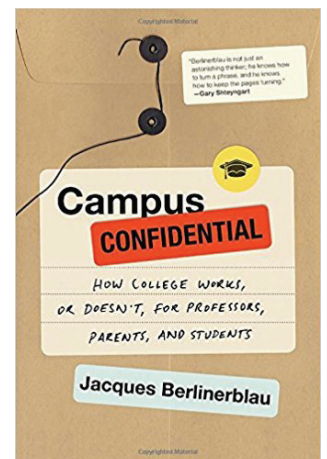
Campus Confidential: How College Works, Or Doesn't, For Professors, Parents, and Students
by Jacques Berlinerblau

Mark Bauerlein, a member of ACTA's Council of Scholars, praises Mr. Berlinerblau's work on its inside cover: "Beneath the droll vignettes runs an earnest faith we absolutely must sustain: liberal education and the teachers who purvey it are crucial to civil society and enlightened culture."

True to his title, Professor Berlinerblau serves up a feast of insider dishes that raise all the critical questions that ACTA and our supporters ponder. How does the balance between full faculty members and adjunct instructors affect undergraduate education? How is American academic culture distinct from American political culture? (One of Berlinerblau's core ideas is that they are not the same, as commonly assumed.)

Can institutions overcome the divide between extolling scholarship (Publish or Perish!) and supporting excellent classroom teachers?

We've added *Campus Confidential* to our ACTA library and encourage readers of *Inside Academe* to explore this worthy analysis. Readers who'd like to listen to Professor Berlinerblau can check out the interview with him on *A Half Hour with Heterodoxy* on Heterodox Academy's website, heterodoxacademy.org. ●



ACTA's Guide on Controlling Costs: A Catalyst for Change

In July, ACTA released its latest report, *How Much is Too Much? Controlling Administrative Costs through Effective Oversight*, which analyzes the administrative-to-instructional cost ratio at postsecondary institutions around the country. Using publicly available data that was self-reported to the U.S. Department of Education by over 1,200 four-year institutions, the guide enables trustees to ask, “How does our institution’s spending on administration compare to what we spend on teaching, and how does it measure up against similar institutions?” Since its release, ACTA has received considerable media attention surrounding the report, and a substantial response from trustees interested in learning more about the cost ratio at their institutions.

Media coverage included the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and the *Hechinger Report*, in addition to numerous smaller publications. *Inside Higher Ed* noted, “The ratios [produced

by the ACTA report] come as many worry that administrative spending has risen faster than other types of spending at colleges and universities. ACTA wants them to be a tool for trustees trying to stop costs from rising.” The *Washington Examiner* pointed out that the “main lesson” of the report is “one of data: college presidents need to be far more attuned to where their budgets are actually going,” and “college executive boards also have an important role to play here in better scrutinizing compensation costs.”

ACTA has also seen an encouraging and robust response from trustees. We have received requests for additional copies of the report from numerous trustees, who intend to distribute the guide to other members of their boards. In some instances, the requests have come directly from institutions’ administrations—presidents and chief financial officers—from the Ivy



League to the West Coast. ACTA’s trustee department has been holding conference calls with trustees who have indicated an interest in learning more about the administrative-instructional cost ratio at their particular institution. We have engaged with trustees from a major private research university in the Northeast, a multi-campus university system in the Midwest, and a state flagship institution in the Southeast, and many others.

With the help of *How Much is Too Much?*, trustees from across the country are learning how to ask the right questions to assess more insightfully the cost ratios at their institutions. ●

ATHENA Roundtable 2017, *continued from 1*

to inflame existing tensions—but must instead be places for inclusivity. Furthermore, instead of defending against potential violence by shutting down controversial speakers, colleges must provide an open arena of diverse viewpoints. Lastly, academic departments must work together to provide dynamic learning opportunities for students, rather than attempting to limit the intellectual diversity of each other’s programs.

Philip Hamburger, professor at Columbia Law School, proposed that for colleges and universities to continue building a culture of inquiry, we must institute reforms. He recommended that private supporters and alumni stop funding programs that no longer deliver a sound education nor protect vital liberties. Carefully chosen litigation will reveal to colleges the real costs of failing to educate students, and it will put pressure on institutions to reform obsolete practices and make urgently needed changes.

Providing an example of the powerful leadership needed to create an environment that facilitates intellectual engagement, **Walter Kimbrough**, president of Dillard University, addressed head-on the cultural polarization and incivility on college campuses by hosting a lecture series that included various controversial figures. He has urged trustees and alumni to work together with their presidents to stimulate robust debate on campus, lest protestors and hecklers silence diverse viewpoints.

The second panel, “Money, Markets, and Management: The Changing Model of Higher Ed,” moderated by *Inside Higher Ed* news editor Paul Fain, focused on whether institutions are making the necessary corrections to keep higher education viable and effective in this new environment. **Michael Adams**, chancellor of Pepperdine University, began the discussion by asking, “Who

(continued on 6)



H E A R D C A M P U S O N

What's the Cost of Free Speech?

At Berkeley, it's \$600,000. On September 14, Ben Shapiro, a conservative writer and radio host, spoke at UC Berkeley. Protestors gathered outside the event, and the police arrested nine in possession of weapons. Large signs posted around the school accused Mr. Shapiro, who is an orthodox Jew, of being a white supremacist. The campus was heavily barricaded and large areas were completely shut down. While security ensured that none were injured and Mr. Shapiro's speech was not disrupted, the costly measures needed alert us to the continued alarming state of free speech on college and university campuses. As ACTA President Michael Poliakoff, who attended the event, aptly commented, "The fact that the campus had to be garrisoned is America's real issue." Institutions must stop shielding their students from exposure to new ideas and start revitalizing viewpoint diversity.

Free Speech Falters at William & Mary

On September 27, students at the College of William & Mary disrupted the presentation of Claire Guthrie Gastañaga, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Virginia. The students prevented Ms. Gastañaga from speaking for more than a few minutes, yelling "ACLU, free speech for who?" and "ACLU, you protect Hitler, too." Protesters, representing the school's Black Lives Matter chapter, claimed that the ACLU had used "the rhetoric of the First Amendment" to defend white supremacists.

Only several months into this school year, invited speakers from across the political spectrum have been shouted down

at campuses across the country, including the University of Oregon, the University of Wisconsin, and Virginia Tech. ACTA wrote to the president and board of William & Mary, advising that the students who disrupted Ms. Gastañaga's address, who were found to have violated the college's code of conduct, be disciplined. We will not cease in our efforts to urge college and university leadership to remain accountable and protect free speech on campus.

Evergreen College Controversy Reaches Bitter End

Professor Bret Weinstein and his wife, Heather Heying, resigned from their faculty positions at Evergreen State College in mid-September. Evergreen will pay \$500,000 to the couple for failing to "protect its employees from repeated provocative and corrosive verbal and written hostility based on race, as well as threats of physical violence." As part of the settlement, the college did not admit any liability for the violent student protests that occurred there in spring.

During this chaotic academic year, students made allegations of intolerance and racism and disrupted college events. Protests erupted after Professor Bret Weinstein criticized the college's 2017 "Day of Absence," for which white students and faculty were asked to vacate campus. A widely viewed YouTube video showed Evergreen's President George Bridges held by students in his office. The students demanded (and got) his official permission to be excused from assignments during their protests. The failure of college leadership to defend their professors and educate their students has put intellectual freedom at Evergreen at grave risk. ●



Lisa Benson Editorial Cartoon used with the permission of Lisa Benson, the Washington Post Writers Group and the Cartoonist Group. All rights reserved.

“As ACTA President Michael Poliakoff, who attended the event, aptly commented, ‘The fact that the campus had to be garrisoned is America’s real issue.’ Institutions must stop shielding their students from exposure to new ideas and start revitalizing viewpoint diversity.”

ATHENA Roundtable 2017 (cont'd)

ATHENA Roundtable Conference



Catherine Rampell



Allison Stanger and Philip Hamburger



Walter Kimbrough



Paul Fain, Michael Adams, Michael Berghoff, Anne Neal, and Stephen Ludwig



Paul Tribble

teaches our children and what do they teach?” He praised ACTA for drawing attention to these two vital areas and detailed the crucial components of Pepperdine’s strong and cost-effective core curriculum that prepares students to be mindful citizens.

Michael Berghoff, chairman of Purdue University’s board of trustees, discussed the willingness of Purdue’s board and its president, Mitch Daniels, to innovate and take risks. Purdue instituted a six-year tuition freeze and took the entrepreneurial step of acquiring Kaplan, a for-profit university. And, as the first class of 200 started this fall at Purdue Polytechnic High School in Indianapolis, the University has initiated a unique pipeline program for underserved students to access higher education. Mr. Berghoff revealed the record numbers for applications, enrollment, and fundraising

that have resulted from these innovations.

Anne Neal, ACTA senior fellow and president emerita, also proposed an innovation—the overhaul of the burdensome accreditation system. She described how the system deceives the very students and families it’s designed to protect, by focusing on issues other than quality. She called for breaking up regional monopolies of accreditors and emphasized ACTA’s work to decouple accreditation from its gatekeeper role for federal funding, returning it to its former role of quality review.

Stephen Ludwig, University of Colorado regent, continued the discussion of misplaced priorities, citing how privileging the pursuit of distinction in academic research can short-change undergraduates and diminish the time tenured faculty spend with students. He implored institutions of higher education to stop de-

veloping exclusive academic clusters and return to their principle mission: serving students. The University of Colorado has pursued this course by guaranteeing admission for community college students and expanding online access.

The conference concluded on a high note with a keynote address by **Paul Tribble** who, as president of Christopher Newport University, spoke about how and why Christopher Newport rose to be a preeminent public liberal arts institution that prepares students to lead lives of meaning, purpose, and consequence. ACTA is proud to note that Christopher Newport University is one of our “A” schools in the *What Will They Learn?* report, the only public university in the nation to achieve a perfect rating, meeting all of the subject area requirements of the survey. ●

President Robert Zimmer Receives Merrill Award

Following ACTA's ATHENA Roundtable Conference, guests gathered at the Ronald Reagan Building Pavilion for the evening's highlight event: the Gala honoring this year's recipient of the Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education, University of Chicago President Robert J. Zimmer.

More than 175 attendees, including 19 students, many from various ACTA-designated Oases of Excellence, enjoyed a cocktail reception and dinner. President Michael Poliakkoff welcomed the attendees and, along with board chairman

Robert Lewit, thanked ACTA's donors, gala sponsors, board of directors, Council of Scholars, and Merrill Selection Committee for working together to ensure that American higher education remains the envy of the world. **Catherine Merrill Williams** then described how her late father Philip Merrill, whose philanthropy helped numerous great educational institutions, would have been happy to honor Mr. Zimmer with this year's award for his work in developing the Chicago Principles on freedom of expression and his unfaltering leadership of one of the highest-ranked universities in the world.

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Presentation of Philip Merrill Award



David Rubenstein



Robert Zimmer



Bret Stephens



Cathy Merrill Williams



Jonathan Cole



Donald Kagan, Steven Benner, and Michael Poliakkoff



Oases of Excellence students Becket Rueda, Delvin Ergott, Rachel Wagner, and Hannah Jackson

Merrill Award Presentation (cont'd)

New York Times columnist **Bret Stephens**, John Mitchell Mason Professor of Sociology and provost emeritus of Columbia University **Jonathan Cole**, and philanthropist and co-CEO of the Carlyle Group **David Rubenstein**, gave tribute speeches for Dr. Zimmer. They lauded his role as a champion of the liberal arts and his remarkable leadership in making the University of Chicago a bastion for academic freedom, educational excellence, and true intellectual diversity.

In a riveting acceptance speech, **President Zimmer** admonished that we must not let open discourse fall prey to the Demosthenes-Feynman Trap—a snare which excludes arguments that challenge us, in order to

affirm what we already believe to be true, ultimately leading to self-deception. He emphasized that colleges and universities



Michael Poliakoff and Robert Zimmer

have an obligation to give all students empowering educations. President Zimmer stressed that limiting free

expression and silencing debate in favor of avoiding discomfort does a disservice to students and diminishes the quality of their education. Administration and faculty are collectively responsible for upholding the values of free speech and intellectual exchange for the student community, so they learn to make sophisticated arguments that respect diverse opinions and spark the liberating exchange of ideas.

ACTA was privileged to recognize his outstanding achievements, and thanks our supporters and friends for their continued assistance as we work to reinvigorate intellectual engagement on college and university campuses. ●

Merrill Award Winner Featured in *New York Times*

At our annual ATHENA conference on the evening of October 20, 2017, University of Chicago President Robert Zimmer received ACTA's Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education. On the morning of October 21, several million readers saw a feature piece about President Zimmer in the *New York Times*. Entitled "America's Best University President," the article was written by columnist Bret Stephens, an alumnus of the University of Chicago, who gave a tribute speech to Zimmer at ACTA's Merrill Award Gala. He recognized Dr. Zimmer as one of the most essential voices in higher education and academia today, and a powerful defender of intellectual diversity.

We join with Mr. Stephens, and many others nationally, in praising Dr. Zimmer's groundbreaking achievements. He has stood courageously in defense of free speech—helping to create and institute the Chicago Principles on freedom of expression—and succeeded in making the University of Chicago a paradigm of the free exchange of ideas. ACTA continues to guide colleges and universities across the country to establish similar principles. ●

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A New Oasis of Excellence at Trinity College

ACTA welcomes the Churchill Institute for the Study and Extension of Western Civilization to our Oases of Excellence network. The Oases network encompasses outstanding initiatives at colleges and universities that promote critical areas of study such as American history, Western civilization, political theory, capitalism, economics, and the Great Books.

Founded by Dr. Gregory B. Smith, professor of political science, the Churchill Institute offers robust programs to the students of Trinity College that explore the role of Western civilization in developing philosophy and political systems. The Institute enriches students through internship experiences and intensive reading groups focused on foundational Western literature, while also engaging the broader community through the Churchill Speakers Series. Dr. Smith, currently visiting the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought through early March 2018, attended ACTA's John Roderick Wilson Oases of Excellence Faculty Conference in June. The conference enabled leaders of academic centers and programs nationwide to share their best practices and discuss the renewal of the liberal arts on college campuses.

By promoting the comprehensive study of the fundamental principles and history of Western civilization, so vital to civic education, the Churchill Institute will help both students and the public contribute to society as free, informed, and responsible citizens. ●

FAR Helps Create a Unique Memorial Gift at Blewett School of Law

This fall, the Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR) pooled the gifts of multiple donors to establish the J. Eugene Marans Scholarship in International Law at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana.

J. Eugene Marans, who passed away in 2016, had an impressive career in international business law. He led the effort to secure voting rights for Americans living abroad, for which he was honored by the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Marans was devoted to his home state of Montana. After his passing, his friends sought to recognize this lifelong commitment by presenting a memorial gift to the University of Montana. FAR was honored to coordinate their donations to create the J. Eugene Marans scholarship, which will support students to study international law in China.

"Gene's friends came to us with a mission: to honor and extend his legacy in American and international law," said Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, Ph.D., executive director of the Fund for Academic Renewal. "FAR helped the donors to design a gift that reflects their philanthropic vision and will have a lasting impact. We were pleased to work with the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana to build a program that carries on Gene's intellectual curiosity and passion for international affairs."

Recipients of the J. Eugene Marans Scholarship will take courses ranging from comparative international business law to

environmental law at the Southwest University of Political Science and Law in Chongqing and the China Youth University of Political Studies in Beijing. The first award of a scholarship will occur next spring.

Commending FAR's service, Emil Frankel, a long-time friend of J. Eugene Marans and a donor to the scholarship fund, remarked, "Gene cared deeply about his home state of Montana, as well as about inspiring future generations to serve as informed contributing members of society. We wanted to bring Gene's many friends and colleagues together to honor his distinguished career and pro bono activities. FAR worked with us to pool our funds and structure a gift that would achieve great impact for years to come."

FAR advises donors in structuring gifts to colleges and universities that enrich academic excellence and intellectual diversity. If you are interested in planning a unique endowment to a college or university or want to learn more about FAR's work to assist donors in making meaningful gifts, please visit AcademicRenewal.org, call 202.467.6787, or email info@AcademicRenewal.org. ●



Learn more at
AcademicRenewal.org

This fall, several ACTA staff members have written, published, and presented their academic work in various venues across the country. With their own scholarship, our energetic staff demonstrate their commitment to academic excellence and to advancing the liberal arts in academia and the world at large.

Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, the executive director of the Fund for Academic Renewal, published an article in the *Political Science Reviewer* entitled “Voegelin on Aristotle’s ‘Science of the Polis,’” as part of the journal’s series on political philosopher Eric Voegelin and his use of Aristotelian approaches to political science.

In addition, Dr. Merrill served in August as an expert panelist for the National Endowment of Humanities (NEH), working to review the merits

of proposals submitted to the NEH for funding. And in September, she was invited to participate in a Liberty Fund colloquium in Indianapolis. There, with fellow panelists, she discussed “Liberty, Responsibility, and the Nation-State” as part of the day-long seminar.

On August 31, **Shaun Rieley**, ACTA’s program officer for trustee and legislative affairs, presented a paper entitled “The Recovery of Political Science: Eric Voegelin on Science and Scientism” at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in San Francisco. Mr. Rieley is a Ph.D. candidate at the Catholic University of America.

In October, ACTA senior vice president of policy and programs **Karen Hyman**, presented a paper in partnership with colleague Dr. Joe Bradley, from the University of Illinois College of

Engineering, at the International Vincentian Business Ethics Conference in Chicago. The paper focused on ethics in engineering education and how a less utopian approach to technology can help students think more practically and ethically about solving some of the Grand Challenges in engineering. The paper uses the example of SunBuckets, a solar cooking device company started by Dr. Bradley and others at the University of Illinois, as an exemplary way to approach difficult problems.

As we travel the country, we are inspired by new ideas on how to pursue our mission. At every conference and symposium, ACTA leaders are gratified to see how our intellectual output provokes thoughtful conversations and lively debates about education, politics, and culture. ●

New Faces at ACTA

Three new staff members joined our ranks this fall to help us fight on the frontlines of higher education reform. We are pleased to welcome **Michael Deshaies** as vice president of development and strategic partnerships. He will work with ACTA’s growing donor network, engaging new supporters dedicated to preserving excellence on college campuses. Mr. Deshaies brings extensive experience in the nonprofit sector. Prior to joining ACTA, Mr. Deshaies led development and communications at the Jack Miller Center for Teaching America’s Founding Principles and History, and held leadership positions at several corporate telecommunications companies.

Douglas Sprei filled the vital role of director of communications. Leading ACTA’s communications team, he will work to expand our outreach to new audiences and craft our messages on academic freedom, excellence, and accountability to key stakeholders. Mr. Sprei worked as the national director of communications at Learning Ally, a nonprofit that improves learning opportunities for millions of students with disabilities. Prior to his work at Learning Ally, he led communications at the Orphan Foundation of America. We also expanded our communications team with the addition of a new program associate, **Elliott Cole**. Elliott is from Leicester, England and recently graduated from the University of Arkansas–Fayetteville, where he received a B.A. in political science, and minors in economics and history.

We are excited to welcome these new additions to our staff and look forward to the important leadership they will provide. ●



Mike Deshaies, Doug Sprei, and Elliott Cole

In Memoriam

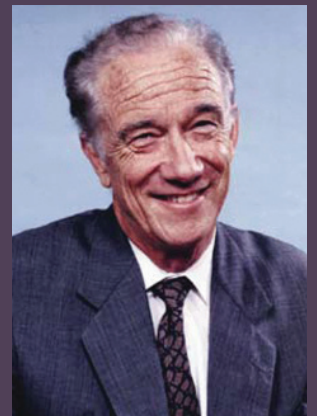


We mourn the passing of ACTA's scholar-in-residence, **Elizabeth Capaldi Phillips**, whose talented leadership benefitted ACTA enormously, and contributed to transformative progress in higher education. She helped steer ACTA adeptly on issues of college governance and the efficient use of educational resources. Dr. Capaldi Phillips led a brilliant career as a beloved professor, passionate scholar, and accomplished university administrator. Through her administrative posts, she consistently demonstrated her deep commitment to learning and student success. She served as the provost of the University of Florida from 1996 to 1999 and was the chief academic officer of Arizona State University as it became a national model for cost-effectiveness and innovation in student learning. She was a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science (serving as its president in 1999–2000), and the Midwestern Psychological Association (serving as its president in 1991–92).

We are indebted to her for her contributions that furthered ACTA's mission. She sat on the Donor Advisory Board of the Fund for Academic Renewal, worked towards accreditation reform, and co-authored with President Poliakoff *The Cost of Chaos in the Curriculum*, an ACTA report that reveals the burdensome cost of vast and unfocused college curricula to both student learning and university funding. "Betty Capaldi Phillips," commented Dr. Poliakoff, "made order out of the chaos that is so often the state of higher education. She was extraordinary." Her powerful leadership and incredible friendship will be greatly missed.

We also remember **Joe Fulcher**, husband of Jane Fraser, a member of ACTA's board of directors. We were grateful for his attendance at ACTA events and for the couple's dedicated support. Mr. Fulcher earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas and his J.D. from the University of New Mexico. Mr. Fulcher had a successful private law practice and great impact in the nonprofit sector as well. His outstanding career included leadership positions at the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute and service as general counsel of both the Lovelace Foundation and Lovelace Medical Center.

Alongside his wife, who served as president of the Stuttering Foundation—an international organization founded in 1947 by Ms. Fraser's father, Malcolm Fraser, to develop speech services for adults and children who stutter—Mr. Fulcher furthered the Foundation's work in many capacities, as vice president, assistant secretary, treasurer, and member of the annual audit committee. Under their leadership, the Stuttering Foundation grew remarkably in endowments and global outreach to assist 135 countries each year, including many where resources for those with speech disabilities were nonexistent. Mr. Fulcher's faithful work ethic and dedication to assisting others was an example for all of those around him. We mourn his loss and honor his unwavering commitment to service that meaningfully affected the lives of so many.



What Will They Learn?, *continued from 3*

of managers thought recent college graduates lacked writing proficiency and communication skills. The seven core subjects recommended by What Will They Learn?™ provide students the opportunity to write effectively, analyze data and text critically, and form logical conclusions.

Universities also must strive to protect academic freedom on campus. That is why this year's WWTL report includes Heterodox Academy's "Guide to Colleges," which rates America's top 100 universities and top 50 liberal arts colleges based on their support for viewpoint diversity. Including the Heterodox Academy's ratings reinforces ACTA's longtime assertion that the free exchange of ideas and freedom of inquiry guarantee the integrity of a liberal arts education. With American students facing a tough job market and a polarized political climate, the necessity for colleges and universities to prepare graduates who are ready for the challenges of career and citizenship is all the more critical. It is time taxpayers and policymakers hold America's higher education institutions accountable for their academic standards.

For nearly a decade, ACTA's emphasis on the revitalization of a shared core has made an ever-growing impact. See how *your* alma mater fares on WhatWillTheyLearn.com, or order a copy of the guide at GoACTA.org. ●



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